

REMARKS

Claim 9 has been canceled and replaced with new independent claim 17. The dependencies of claims 10-11, 13 and 15-16 have been amended accordingly. Reexamination and reconsideration are respectfully requested.

Initially, the Office Action rejected the claims under 35 U.S.C. §112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the enablement requirement.

Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection. Applicants' specification clearly teaches an actuating element that is rotatable about its longitudinal axis and also movable in the longitudinal direction, for example, a rotary knob which can rotate and also be pressed in and out (see page 1, last paragraph, and EP 0 796 766). Such an actuating element may also be provided with an "additional movement", that is, the additional movement is one that is in addition to the rotary and longitudinal movements. Applicants even describe the additional movement as being possibly a "wobbling" or "parallel displacement" of the actuating element (see page 2, last paragraph).

Accordingly, Applicants' new claim 17 specifies the rotatable and longitudinal movements of the actuating element, as well as the "additional movement" consistent with the clear description in the specification. Hence, Applicants submit claim 17 is in compliance with the strictures of 35 U.S.C. §112.

In the Office Action, original claims 9-16 were rejected as obvious over NASON et al. (US 6,437,809) in view of MACOR (US 5,841,849). Applicants

respectfully traverse this rejection in view of the following remarks and new claim 17.

Initially, Applicants point out that their display control device makes use of an actuating element that is rotatable about the longitudinal axis, movable in the direction of the longitudinal axis, and includes an additional movement having two additional degrees of freedom. By use of such an actuating element having the additional movement shown by the arrows in Figures 1-5, the operator of a vehicle can select fields in a marginal region (for example, region 2 shown in Figure 1) of a display screen via the additional movement. Upon selecting such a field, a subordinate field, associated with the field in a marginal region, is displayed in a central region. Elements of the subordinate field are selected and/or actuated by the rotary and/or longitudinal movement of the actuating element. In other words, the additional movement is used to select a field in the marginal region, whereas the original movements, i.e., the rotary/longitudinal movements of the actuating element, are used to select and actuate subordinate fields in the central region of the display screen, which subordinate fields are associated with the selected field in the marginal region.

In contrast, as an initial matter, NASON is directed toward a computer monitor user interface using traditional input devices such as a mouse or keyboard as acknowledged by the Examiner. It does not, therefore, disclose Applicants recited actuating element. Nor are these deficiencies remedied by MACOR, which provides a personal telecommunication device having a

depressable trackball 22. Such an actuator provides no "additional movement" and, indeed, is restricted by its own construction to select degrees of freedom.

Moreover, even the combination of MACOR and NASON would still not arrive at Applicants' claimed invention. Applicants invention provides for a marginal area of a display screen containing fields of a menu that can be selected via the additional movement of the actuator. Upon using the additional movement to select a field in a marginal area, subordinate fields associated with that field are displayed in the central area. Those subordinate fields, however, are only selected and/or actuated via the rotational and/or longitudinal movement of the actuator.

In view of the above, Applicants submit that even a combination of NASON and MACOR does not arrive at Applicants' invention. Hence, Applicants respectfully submit independent claim 17 is patentable thereover.

Moreover, Applicants' dependent claims recite specific features not taught or suggested by NASON in combination with MACOR. For example, claim 13 recites that the additional movement is a reversible movement, and claim 14 recites that the reversible movement is carried out against the effect of a spring. Clearly, neither the mouse or trackball provide for such a reversible movement, let alone one carried out against the effect of a spring.


In view of the foregoing, Applicants submit claims 10-17 are in condition for allowance. An early notice to that effect is solicited.

If there are any questions regarding this amendment or the application in general, a telephone call to the undersigned would be appreciated since this should expedite the prosecution of the application for all concerned.

If necessary to effect a timely response, this paper should be considered as a petition for an Extension of Time sufficient to effect a timely response, and please charge any deficiency in fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. 05-1323 (Docket #080437.48802US).

Respectfully submitted,

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